REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated June 1, 2005. Claims 1 to 30 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 10, 16 and 25 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

As an initial matter, Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during a telephonic interview on August 25, 2005. Applicants submit that the foregoing amendments to the claims and following remarks reflect the entire substance of the interview.

Claims 1 to 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over WO 98/59311 (Saunders) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,110,044 (Stern) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,498,655 (Brooks). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

During the above-referenced interview, Applicants' representative clarified that the present application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/254,321 filed December 11, 2000 and that U.S. Patent No. 6,498,655 (Brooks) was filed on June 1, 2001. Therefore, Applicants submit that Brooks is not available as a prior art reference in regard to the present application. In response, the Examiner agreed to remove Brooks as a reference.

In regard to substantive discussion of the claims, Applicants' representative reiterated previously submitted remarks in support of the pending claims. The Examiner suggested that adding an additional feature of retracting the voucher into the gaming printer

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for voiding purposes would help clarify how the present invention differs from the cashless methods as disclosed by Saunders.

Turning specifically to claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to a method for verification of a voucher by a gaming printer, which includes: receiving a validation character string by the gaming printer; printing the received validation character string on the voucher by the gaming printer; scanning the voucher for a scanned validation character string; verifying the voucher by the gaming printer using the received validation character string and the scanned validation character string; and voiding the voucher by the gaming printer by retracting the voucher and printing voiding marks on the voucher if the voucher is not verified.

In contrast, Saunders discloses a cashless peripheral device connected to a gaming system. A ticket printer prints a bar code on a ticket in response to a cash-out signal from the gaming system. A ticket reader reads the amount printed on the ticket. If the printed value corresponds to the value which should have been printed, a ticket-out transport delivers the printed ticket to the player cashing out from the gaming system. However, Saunders does not disclose voiding the voucher by the gaming printer by retracting the voucher and printing voiding marks on the voucher if the voucher is not verified. Instead, Saunders discloses that if the information printed on the ticket is not correct, a transport holds the ticket and an error message is sent to a central computer and an error message is displayed to a player.

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Stern discloses enhancing security in issuing and redeeming gaming tickets using machine-readable indicium, such as barcoding, embodied in a payout ticket from a gaming machine. When the ticket is presented for redemption, the machine-readable indicium is read automatically to provide electronic signals which are then processed electronically to determine whether the ticket is valid.

As Stern is concerned entirely with problems associated with redeeming properly printed payout tickets, Stern is silent with regard to methods for verifying a voucher during the printing process in order to prevent issuance of vouchers that cannot be redeemed because the voucher was improperly printed. While Stern does mention OCR, Stern fails to disclose any features of how OCR might be used for verification of a voucher before the voucher is issued. Specifically, Stern fails to disclose printing voiding marks on an improperly printed voucher. Stern thus assumes that the ticket being presented for redemption has been properly printed and is completely silent on preventing issuance of an improperly printed voucher.

Modifying the cashless peripheral device of Saunders in light of the disclosures of Stern does not result in a device having all of the features of Applicants' claimed gaming printer. Namely, neither Saunders nor Stern disclose voiding a voucher by retracting the voucher and printing voiding marks on the voucher by a gaming printer if the voucher is not verified. Saunders only discloses a ticket-out transport that can hold an invalid ticket. Stern never addresses management of an invalid voucher at all. Therefore, the combination of Saunders with Stern does not teach or suggest all of the features of Applicants' invention as claimed in independent Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

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Amended independent Claim 10 is directed to an apparatus that implements the method of Claim 1. Therefore, Applicants submit that the foregoing discussion regarding Claim 1 applies equally to Claim 10. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 10 is in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

Amended independent Claim 16 calls for, in part, printing a validation character string and barcode on the voucher and verifying the voucher using the scanned validation character string and the scanned barcode. If the voucher cannot be verified, the voucher is voided by retracting the voucher and printing voiding marks on the voucher.

As discussed above, neither Saunders nor Stern discloses voiding of a voucher by retracting and printing if the voucher cannot be verified. In addition, neither Saunders nor Stern disclose verifying a voucher using a scanned validation character string and a scanned barcode by the gaming printer. Therefore, the combination of Saunders with Stern does not teach or suggest all of the features of Applicants' invention as claimed in independent Claim 16. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 16 is in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

Independent Claim 25 is an apparatus claim corresponding to Claim 16. Applicants submit that the foregoing discussion regarding Claim 16 applies equally to Claim 25. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 25 is in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

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Respectfully submitted,
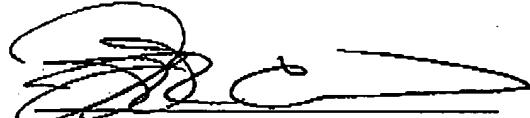
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